

North Carolina Presbyterian Historical Society

Summer, 2017

Fall Meeting, October 14

Concord—Interesting History, and Beautiful Gardens



First Presbyterian Church, Concord

Photo by Dave Overcash, www.flickr.com

Surprisingly, our society has not visited the town of Concord before, nor its very historic **First Presbyterian Church**. Concord is the county seat of Cabarrus County, which was set up by the legislature in 1793. The county encompassed two distinct areas – the part settled largely by German Lutherans, and the part settled largely by Scotch-Irish Presbyterians. Each wished to have the county seat in its own part of the county, and it was not until 1795 that a site could be agreed upon. The new town was laid out in 1796, and it was appropriately named Concord.

With encouragement from the established congregations of Rocky River and Poplar Tent, land was obtained in 1804 for the small Presbyterian congregation in Concord. A 12-sided log church was finally built in 1810, and it was the only place of worship in town until 1837, when a Methodist revival led to the establishment of a Methodist church. About that time the Presbyterians' log church was taken down, replaced by a brick church that served until 1874. The town's first pipe organ was installed in the third church in 1880. In 1905 the fourth church was built, and in 1927 the present sanctuary was completed, along with an educational building. Their first Vacation Bible School was planned for the summer of 1935, but the terrible polio epidemic of that summer prevented all such gatherings. In 1989 a new educational building was completed and named the Will Young Building in honor of the sexton who served the church for 70 years.

The church's Heritage Room preserves many items from the past, including two stained glass windows from the 1905 church.

In 1958 the nearby Fellowship House was purchased. Built in the 1920s for one of J.W. Cannon's sons, it is used for small weddings, receptions, some Sunday School classes, and meetings.

The 200-year-old cemetery at the site of the earliest church was neglected for many years after the Civil War until one of the Pfifer family made it into a **Memorial Garden** in 1930. Her son later created a trust for its preservation. Over the decades



Photo from "A Place of Life: Concord Memorial Garden," *Our State Magazine*, January 10, 2011

since, the three-acre cemetery has been turned into one of the most beautiful garden spots in the state, written up in *Our State Magazine*. A columbarium was added in 1989.

The Town of Concord

As the county seat, Concord developed around the court house. The town was incorporated in 1806, but no records before 1837 have survived. In 1843 the Lutherans moved from the countryside into town, and in 1859 an African-American church was organized as Zion Chapel, later Zion Hill A.M.E. Church. This congregation founded Zion Wesley Institute in 1879 for the education of its members. In 1882 it was moved to Salisbury, where it grew into Livingstone College.

In 1867 the Rev. Luke Dorland was commissioned by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to establish an institution for the education of the daughters of freed slaves. Scotia Seminary was chartered in Concord in 1870, the first such educational institution for African-American females. It is now Barber-Scotia College.

In the 1880s Episcopal, Reformed, and Baptist congregations sprang up, and a Congregational church in 1902.

Local industry began when the first small cotton mill went into full operation in 1842. In the 1850s the railroad came through just to the west of the town. The town was briefly occupied by Union soldiers, but did not suffer greatly from the Civil War.

In 1870 the town had only 800 inhabitants, but the railroad meant that goods could easily be shipped to market. When the former courthouse burned in 1875, a handsome new one was built the next year.

Capt. J. W. Odell purchased the Concord Cotton Factory in 1877 and in 15 years had added three more mills and the only bleachery in the South. During this period, J. W. Cannon learned the business of cotton buying as a very young man. By 1887 he organized the first of his textile companies just north of Concord, in an area that would become Kannapolis. In 1897 he built a new plant in Concord to keep up with demand for "Cannon Towels." These textile leaders needed a bank and so founded the Concord National Bank in 1888.

By 1890 Concord had grown to 4,000 persons, and the steam-driven brick plant was forming 35,000 bricks a day to keep up with construction. Two elegant hotels were built, and there was a street railway. A public school system was established in 1891. The new building for city offices housed an "Opera House" on the second floor for traveling companies and local entertainments.

James P. Cook, editor of a Concord newspaper, began campaigning about 1890 to have young white boys moved out of the prisons into a "training center." He was joined by powerful women's organizations in the state, and in 1909 the Stonewall Jackson Training Center opened outside Concord.

Concord's population grew to almost 8,000 by 1900, and it continued to grow throughout the 20th century. While the textile industry continued to be primary for many years, banking grew and other businesses began. By annexation, Concord gained the Charlotte Motor Speedway and a huge Phillip Morris cigarette manufacturing plant.

The city's current population is estimated to be almost 90,000. The historic portion, however, is lively and very appealing. Take time to enjoy it while we are there!



Historic Cabarrus County Courthouse, built 1875.
Photo: www.concorddowntown.com



E.T. Cannon House, First Presbyterian's Fellowship House, built 1920s.
Photo: www.concorddowntown.com

Board of Directors

John Goodman, President

Phone: 910-862-3730

Email: presbypicker2@gmail.com

Dan and Flo Durway, Co-Secretaries

Phone: 919-846-5757

E-mail: dandurway@bellsouth.net,
flodurway@bellsouth.net

John Myhre, Treasurer and Past President

Phone: (919) 772-5514

E-mail: johnmyhre@nc.rr.com

Steve McRae, Program Chair

Phone: (336) 693-1929

Email: smcrae@stevemcraelaw.com

Sarah Alexander, Membership Chair

Phone: (828) 698-9388

Email: sitka@bellsouth.net

Connie Hudson, Awards Chair

Phone: (919) 787-6638

Email: ibchudson@webtv.com

Sally MacLeod Owens, Historian

Phone: (919)-835-0920

Email: sally.owens76@gmail.com

Sam Martin, Publicity Chair

Phone: (910) 428-4165

Email: smartin8@embarqmail.com

Barbara T. Cain, Newsletter Editor

Phone: (919)-782-0944

E-mail: btcain@nc.rr.com

Awards: If you know of a recently published church history or a completed church history project that you feel is worthy of consideration for an award, please send the book or a description of the project to Awards Chairman Mrs. Connie Hudson, 2305 Byrd St., Raleigh, NC 27608. Her other contact information is above. Awards are given in the spring for works published or completed in the previous year or in a recent year.

Board of Directors Meeting

April 21, 2017

On the Friday evening during our Spring Tour, the Board of Directors met at the Comfort Inn in Pinehurst. President John Goodman asked Sam Martin to be the acting secretary, as Dan and Flo Durway were unable to attend the meeting. He then opened the meeting with prayer.

John Myhre gave the treasurer's report, and John Goodman passed out copies of the secretary's report of the last meeting. Both were approved.

President Goodman appointed Barbara Cain, Sally Owens, and Tom Spence to be the nominating committee for the fall election. The offices to be filled this year are president, secretary, treasurer, and membership chair.

There followed a discussion on where this year's Fall Meeting should be held. Program Chairman Steve McRae suggested Providence Church in Charlotte, which celebrates its 250th anniversary this year. The board approved this suggestion.

Sarah Alexander provided an updated membership roster. John Myhre reported on the passing of Howard Pate, Jr., of Spring Lake.

Sally Owens reported on inquiries she had received about Grassy Creek church (closed). Barbara Cain gave a request for articles and items for the newsletter.

The American Genealogical Society will be holding their annual meeting in Raleigh during the second week of May. John Myhre reserved a table in the display area for the Society to advertise during the event on the evening of May 11 at the North Carolina Museum of History. Barbara Cain, John Myhre, Ann Myhre, and Sam Martin will attend and distribute information to all who are interested.

Publicity Chair Sam Martin reported that he will be attending the Presbytery of Western North Carolina meeting at Montreat on April 25. He agreed to deliver the Presbyterian Hymnal used by Randy Taylor to the Presbyterian Heritage Center while in Montreat. On Saturday, May 28, he will be presenting the 250th anniversary certificate from the Society to the Mocksville First Presbyterian Church. celebration on Saturday, May 28 at Joppa cemetery. He also has been attending a several Presbyterian Women's gathering

The meeting was closed with prayer by John Goodman.

Fun at the Spring Meeting!

Moore and Richmond Counties, April 21-22, 2017

(Photographs by Bill Wade and Barbara Cain)

What a great time we had on our Spring Tour this year! In two days we could really see the generations of progress in one part of North Carolina – the Presbyterian churches established by Scottish settlers, the histories of these churches and their families, the all-important schooling of children, and the enormous changes made by the coming of the railroads.



We began at **Jackson Springs** in southern Moore County, where the Scots Presbyterians began to meet in 1817 -- 200 years ago. Judy Burroughs gave us a very interesting history of the church and showed us around. Our president, John Goodman, presented her with a certificate of thanks to the church for their hospitality.



Our next stop was **Mount Carmel** in Richmond County, where a church was formed by Scottish settlers in 1776. There we met in the 1944 building, and Mr. Evon Craven read interesting portions from the old minutes and passed around scrapbooks about the church's families and its more recent history. Visiting their beautifully restored former church with its weathered gravestones was a real



highlight of the trip, bringing to mind the early congregations and ministers. One was the Rev. Colin Lindsay, who would have preached there in Gaelic from 1799 to 1812, despite having been deposed from the ministry in 1810. He virulently opposed the Great Revival and indulged regularly in "ardent spirits," but was much loved by the Gaelic-speaking Scots.



1922. "Schoolteacher" Brenda Baucom welcomed us and told us much about how school was taught at that time. She also told us about the community, and

the old photographs and artifacts from those days.

Education has always been important to Presbyterians, and many early schools were taught by Presbyterian ministers. When the state began to provide for rural education, there continued to be real pride in a community's one-room school. One of these was the **Old Bostick School House**, where children from first through seventh grades were taught between 1880 and

That evening we had supper at the Squire's Pub in Pinehurst and then checked into the Comfort Inn for a good night's sleep.



In the morning we drove down to **Hamlet** and were made very welcome at the **First Presbyterian Church**. Commissioned Ruling Elder Belinda Rice greeted us in their sanctuary with its beautiful stained glass windows, and told us about the church's outreach to

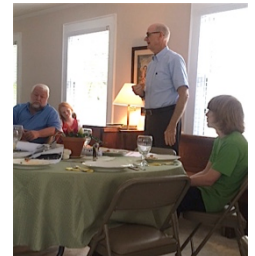


the community. The church was, of course, very much involved with the huge railroad community that was Hamlet in the 20th century, and it still serves the community in many ways. Members of the church also told us stories about the church building, built in 1923 in the English Gothic style, and we toured its facilities.



Then we headed out to the center of town and the **Hamlet Depot**, with Mr. Sam Ballard from the church continuing as our guide. At one time five Seaboard Railroad passenger lines passed through Hamlet, and as many as 30 trains a day stopped there. The Depot is still a passenger train station, but much of it is now a museum of wonderful memorabilia from the railroads and the town. We also saw the reproduction of the Tornado, the first railroad engine to come into Raleigh, and visited another museum, the National Railroad Museum.

When we finally arrived at **Marks Creek Presbyterian Church** just outside Hamlet, organized in 1820, we were greeted by a congregation very much aware of their Scottish heritage! They gave us a wonderful lunch, and Mrs. Barbara Brearly and others told us about their history. CRE Ken Goins told us about his family's memories of the early days.



Afterwards, members offered to show us the old Campbell house nearby, so some of us walked and others rode down the sand road that led to it. The house is well cared for, near the old road that ran from Cheraw, S.C., to Fayetteville – its ruts still visible. The Campbells used to make the sacrament wine for Marks Creek. Standing there, we could well imagine the earlier generations who had made their homes in the Sandhills of North Carolina. *What a great way to end our weekend's celebration of the heritage of those early Scottish Presbyterian settlers!*



Making 21st Century History: Caldwell Presbyterian Church

1609 East Fifth St., Charlotte, NC 28204.

There's a congregation in Charlotte that has been making a new kind of Presbyterian history lately. Its early history, however, was fairly standard.

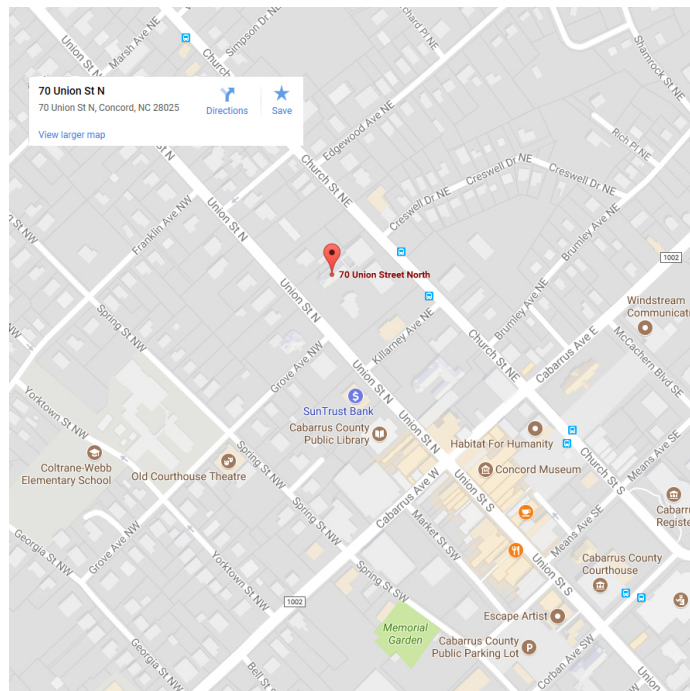
Caldwell Memorial was organized in 1912 as Knox Presbyterian Church in the Elizabeth neighborhood of Charlotte. Its membership grew from 130 in 1912 to 525 in 1922, when its present sanctuary was completed. In the same year, the name was changed to Caldwell Memorial, in response to a generous gift from a daughter of the Caldwell family. The church thrived for many years and helped to found numerous churches in the Charlotte area.

As the 20th century wore on, Charlotte's traditional Presbyterians were moving more and more to the suburbs. By 2006 there were fewer than two dozen families at Caldwell, and the average attendance was 17. A biracial couple had visited the church several times and found their welcome so genuinely warm that they decided to join Caldwell, but that very Sunday the Session announced its decision to ask presbytery to close the church, determined to bring all their friends the next week. Soon attendance had doubled, and the decision to close was reversed. Caldwell was reborn as a healthy and diverse Presbyterian church with a commitment to its urban neighborhood.

In 2008 the church called the Rev. John Cleghorn to be its pastor. By the time Caldwell celebrated its centennial, the church had 194 members. In 2016 the number was 277, and they are seeking an associate pastor. Worship combines the traditions of the Reformed faith with informality and joy, including a wonderful Gospel choir. Their preschool serves the children of Spanish-speaking immigrants, helping them transition to English before they enter kindergarten. Tutors assist in a high-poverty elementary school nearby. A vegetable garden behind the church helps community members feed themselves. Members help a neighboring church provide emergency winter shelter for their homeless neighbors.

The home page of Caldwell's website (<http://www.caldwellpresby.org>) has an excellent video telling of the enthusiasm and love felt by old members and new ones alike. It can also be found on YouTube, "Resurrecting Caldwell Presbyterian Church." It is well worth watching. The welcome is what made the difference. As their website proclaims "God Invites. We Welcome. All."

* * * * *



First Presbyterian Church, 70 Union St. North, Concord, NC 28025

**North Carolina Presbyterian Historical Society
2017 Fall Meeting
Concord, NC**

Saturday, October 14

9:30 – 10:30	Registration and social time at First Presbyterian Church, 70 Union St. North, Concord, NC 28025.
10:30 – 12:30	Welcome History of First Presbyterian Church Tour of church, heritage room, Fellowship House Tour of the Memorial Gardens
12:30 – 1:15	Lunch
1:15 – 2:00	Business meeting
2:00	Adjourn

Motels: If you wish to stay the night before or after the meeting, there are a number of motels near Exit 58 of I-85. There also are several Airbnb houses in the area.

Directions (see map of Concord on previous page): The center of Concord is just to the south of I-85 and north of NC 49. From I-85, take Exit 58 onto Hwy 601 South. After passing a mall and the hospital on the left, take a slight left onto Church St. North. Turn right on Edgeware Ave. NE. In one block turn left on Union St. North. The church is in that block.

If approaching on NC 49, turn north onto Union St. South (Hwy 601 North), keep right to continue on Union St. South, and continue to 70 Union St. North.

From US Hwy 74, go north on US Hwy 601 North, which becomes Union St. South in Concord. Keep right to continue on Union St. into town to 70 Union St. North.

Registration fee is \$15. This includes coffee and refreshments Friday morning and lunch. Please send the form below and check (payable to NCPHS) by October 7 to NCPHS, P.O. Box 20804, Raleigh, NC 27619-0804. If you have questions, please contact our Program Chairman Steve McRae, (336) 693-1929, smcrae@stevemcraelaw.com.

Registration, Fall Meeting, October 14, 2017

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Registrations: _____ @ \$15.00 = \$ _____

Dues if included (Individual \$15; Family \$20; Individual Life Membership, \$125): \$ _____

Total enclosed: \$ _____ Please send this form with your check (made out to NCPHS) **by Oct. 7**
to NCPHS, P.O. Box 20804, Raleigh, NC 27619-0804.

If you can do so, please put the following announcement in your church bulletin or newsletter:

The North Carolina Presbyterian Historical Society will hold its Fall Meeting on **Saturday, Oct. 14**, at **First Presbyterian Church, Concord, N.C.** Included will be a tour of their stunning **Memorial Gardens**, three acres of beauty designed around the 200-year-old cemetery. Please join us for a memorable day. Registration is \$15. The schedule, registration form, and address are on our website at www.ncphsociety.org, or contact Program Chair Steve McRae at (336) 693-1929.

**** If you haven't paid your 2017 dues yet, please send them with the registration form. Individual \$15
Family \$20; Individual Life Membership, \$125. ****

North Carolina Presbyterian Historical Society
P.O. Box 20804
Raleigh, NC 27619-0804

Fall Meeting: October 14 at First Presbyterian Church, Concord, N.C.
See registration form on p. 7.